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ABSTRACT

An educational intervention program for lower income children was characterized by parent involvement in all stages. Active dialogue between parents, teachers and the Boston University Head Start Evaluation and Research Center (BUER) was considered a primary purpose and encouraged by BUER training, research and service activities. An ethical code evolved which committed university researchers to a non-traditional research program, open to community involvement and criticism. The need for institutional change was perceived as more critical than any particular curricular content, and the program was closely involved with community problems. Program components discussed are: parent involvement in decision making; inservice training; observation and feedback; diagnostic and follow-up work; and development of a new research tool, the Classroom Behavior Form. The complex nature of evaluation is discussed, and the use of I.Q. gains to measure the success of intervention programs is questioned. Political, social, and economic goals of Head Start programs are cited as more important to the needs of the people served than the education per se of young children. Head Start evaluation studies should, therefore, include evaluation of these goals. (NH)

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Head Start Evaluation and Research Center
Special Education Department
Boston University

PRESCHOOL EDUCATION AND POVERTY: THE DISTANCE IN BETWEEN

Final report of 1968-69 interventional program

PS004017

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Principal Investigator

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Foreword

The intervention described herein was an extraordinary and sustained involvement with children, teachers, parents and a total community. Wewere always in the middle of conflict which we slowly came to realize was the result of the poverty and racism in which we live rather than the incompetence and self-seeking that it seemed to be. Attempts to do something about poverty inevitably run smack into its correlates, antecedents and consequences.

Everyone wants to do something about it, but the chain of circumstances are formidable and, often, impenetrable. Head Start has developed a face in the struggle, but one without depth or force. While this leads to meagerness and mediocrity, it also produces a point of departure unencumbered by traditions. What is true of Head Start will necessarily be true of evaluators and researchers who tried to make sense out of data obtained from Head Start operations and individuals. They both have been funded, administered and supervised in the midsts of nonexistent guidelines, impossible time schedules, continuous delays and insufficient personnel. The history of confusion, compromise, and conflict in the development of the Evaluation and Research Centers has been closely matched by that which has existed throughout the development and operation of Head Start Centers. Professionals at both ends worked with rules, time schedules, facilities, personnel and policies that would not have been acceptable in other circumstances. But this was the poverty program, and we learned to expect little. The most important evaluation is not what poverty programs have done, but how it has been done. What

have people done together in cities and the rural south which established task oriented coalitions that stumbled along? This report is a description of some of that stumbling.

There are many stumblers who became involved in our enterprise of having residents of a target community play important roles in research and evaluation. The listing of personnel that follows is more than just a listing, but rather a grateful acknowledgement for digging so deeply with us in unexplored terrain.

Joan Costley, evaluation coordinator
Pierre Johannet, psychiatry
Mae Upperman, education
Esther Walters, social service

Observers

Mary Adams
Viola Allen
Marjorie Cole
Nancy Godfrey
Zita Gray
Florene Litthcut
Joan McGrath
Bertha Rogers
Wilma Snowden
Patricia Taylor

Head Start parents, teachers, trainees, neighborhood workers and supervisors were enormously helpful both as protagonists and antagonists. We often felt that understanding might lead to getting along with people, but would not produce change. It is enormously difficult to be honestly interested and involved in change while trying to work with individuals who you are trying to change. Maybe it is impossible. But we suffered with the program and it with us in the valiant but somewhat futile search for change.

Purpose

The aim of the 1968-69 Boston University Head Start Evaluation and Research Center (BUER) interventional program was to create an educational system responsive to the needs of children and the desires of parents, teachers, and the community. To attain responsiveness in the educational system, Head Start staff presented parents, teachers and children with alternatives and then mobilized community resources so that choices had a reasonable chance of being attained. To aid in the presentation and realization of alternatives, BUER developed training, research and service activities which encouraged and sometimes precipitated dialogue between and within teachers, parents, observers, administrators and other professionals. The primary purpose of this presentation was dialogue. By-products pertaining to behaviors and attitudes of children, teachers, classrooms and parents were peripheral and secondary.

Introduction

During the past three years, BUER has collaborated with greater Boston Head Start Centers on a variety of research activities. Through these activities, BUER has discovered rather forcefully that many individuals in lower income communities do not want to be studied unless study produces immediate results which they can understand and which directly and immediately affects the quality of their lives. At first glance, this attitude can be interpreted as revealing an inability to understand the time gap in social science between descriptive and experimental studies and subsequent

development of theory and application. However, due to the conditions and effects of poverty, the target community views many descriptive and experimental studies as irrelevant to their immediate needs. Such research will not have community backing because results of these studies seem to be disconnected from the significant realities of community life. Studies of middle income children and communities, on the other hand, have built in controls for relevancy, (which of course, do not always work.) Because investigators are studying subjects from similar cultural milieus, middle class communities generally share the values and experiences of investigators. As a result, research which indicates a need for change will be considered relevant. Researchers in lower income communities lack these built in controls. Instead, values of target communities must be carefully weighed and reacted to in order to obtain and maintain community backing.

In an effort to fulfill a target community's demand for relevancy, BUER initiated a comprehensive interventional program in the South End of Boston to study institutional change, while, at the same time, being part of that change. The program was characterized by community involvement in planning, application, evaluation, and design of research. Each component of the intervention had overlapping research, service, and training dimensions, and all were initiated by individuals in the community, Head Start staff, or BUER. Every aspect of the intervention has undergone continuous evaluation by staff and community groups. This evaluation served to generate frequent and sometimes disruptive change in the program, and also to encourage active dialogue between parents, teachers, and BUER.

During the intervention an ethical code evolved, partly stated but mostly unwritten, concerning the relations of university researchers to lower income communities. This code became an essential feature of a research program which had to cope with both an increasingly militant community and conflicting university demands. Moreover, the value of developing such an ethical code for constructive research activity became apparent when working with the community. Working toward lower income communities' assuming important segments of control over their lives might very well be more important to the education of children than experimenting with particular teaching approaches.

Well designed research requires that many decisions be made previous to programming--decisions about staff, selection of children, type of intervention, timing and evaluation. These decisions are made on the basis of the initial program of research and evaluation, yet they are decisions affecting the education of children. That initial research program, with its traditional techniques, tests, designs, and personnel, inevitably leads to rejection of community involvement, even if the community has chosen to have evaluation or research. A research program which is designed to be sensitive to community demands, cannot be rigidly planned in advance.

BUER encountered the problem of the incompatibility of standard research techniques with community involvement while obtaining parental permission to test children. When parents were approached individually with the usual platitudes about education and testing, permission was easily obtained. However, when BUER held open meetings about research and invited individuals with a wide spectrum of viewpoints, heated dis-

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cussions about the reason for testing, cultural bias, educational implications, training and values of examiners, and problems of standardization were generated. After such a dialogue many parents became leery of testing and refused permission. This kind of reaction is not surprising from anyone, but especially not from lower income individuals of ethnic and racial minorities, who have been exposed to contradictory professional and lay viewpoints. BUER could have sacrificed parental involvement for the sake of traditional research. Parents who are minimally informed and convinced of the benevolence of researchers, and the worth of science, paper and pencil tests, and the null hypothesis, may be easier to work with. However, BUER was committed to community involvement as a first principle of research. Therefore, it chose to inform parents about the intervention in open community settings with militant viewpoints represented. At the same time, BUER tried to encourage openness as an educational way of life and as a basis for setting up guidelines for staff, parents, and community involvement.

Model: Open and Closed Educational Systems

An educational system is open or closed according to its ability to respond to the desires of children, parents, teachers, administrators and other professionals. To be open, a system must, first of all, be accessible: that is, the system must encourage active communication among personnel within the system, and parents and professionals outside of the system. Secondly, individuals outside of the system must take advantage of this accessibility to influence the system itself.

An open system, then, is dynamic and changing. Rules which define the functioning of the system are tentative; roles of personnel, parents and professionals are flexible. A range of alternatives is available to all concerned, and methods for mediating disputes are characterized by open accessibility to alternatives. In an open system, the parents and community leaders are in continual confrontation, sometimes collaborating with teachers, administrators and other professionals in making decisions crucial to the educational system, but often embroiled in struggles of conflicting values which have been generated by differing life styles.

Of course, educational systems are open or closed to different degrees. Some systems are technically accessible, but inaccessible in practice. School personnel lose contact with individuals both within and without the system. Parents lapse in their efforts to maintain an active dialogue with teachers and administrators. Procedures which were once innovative become standard, and rules and roles lose their flexibility. Creating and then maintaining a truly open system requires continual effort and a succession of extraordinary strategies.

The constantly changing nature of the open system tends to breed a

feeling of insecurity among its participants. Tension and dissonance will result because all participants will not be fully committed to the notion of a changing system. A closed system, on the other hand, provides security for its participants. Rules and roles are carefully prescribed and innovation is regulated within relatively set limits.

The purpose here is not to show that an open system is always superior to a closed system, or the contrary. The extent to which a system ideally should be open depends on a great many factors including interests of parents, personalities of administrators and timing. Rather, the claim here is that the extent to which a system is open and the way in which openness is achieved or is diminished is of prime importance in studying an educational system. Moreover, the need for institutional change which can best be generated in an open system, is critical to the education of children from lower income communities—more so than is any particular curricular content. Such a claim is supported by the fact that even a superior educational system will suffer in a lower income community because of alienation felt by parents and community leaders when other individuals with different values make and carry out all decisions about educational program. The purpose of the BUER intervention was to gauge these effects of the opening system while, at the same time, experimenting with new procedures to reduce problematic alienation.*

*For other discussions of general systems theory and the open-closed system distinction see . . .

Modern Systems Research for the Behavioral Scientist: a source book, Walter Buckley (Ed.). Chicago, 1968.

Application of Model

An investigator studying systematic openness has alternatives: he can survey many systems, or he can intensively study one or more systems. Survey analysis has several limitations. First, no one set of specific characteristics is essential in defining an open system. Nor are the transactions which compose an open system easily categorized. Any comparisons between systems require controls so that criteria for openness are compatible across cases. Instead of surveying many systems, BUER opted to intensively study one system while obtaining guidelines from a small number of contrasting systems. Thus, a primary goal was to study an educational system in a live situation with active and intervening agents, including the study team.

The study and concomittant pursuit of openness in Head Start programs, or any educational agencies, is neccessarily a long, painful process impaled on a contradiction--the success of the pursuit will insure the failure of the study. Nevertheless, BUER courageously became involved in the following ways:

> Contributing to setting up a public educational system independent of the public school system (Head Start);
>
> Providing an educational program for teachers, and educational supervisors, and the joint development of educational goals;
>
> Attending to problems of physical and mental health and nutrition, in the family and the community;
>
> Reactivating parent advisory councils;
>
> Placing individuals without formal training in professional roles;

> And, most importantly, creating subsystems with extraordinarily different structures, sizes, and degrees of autonomy.

To evaluate the extent to which this approach contributed to openness, the interaction of parents, teachers, administrators, and researchers must be observed. General practice and specific episodes become the evidence supporting claims that some components of the intervention are contributing to openness while others are not. Though the model of the system is comparatively simple, analysis is extremely complex in that it evolved throughout the intervention.

Operational Components of the Intervention

From 1966 to 1969 BUER and greater Boston Head Start centers developed projects and activities involving target communities in all stages of planning, operation, and evaluation of educational programs. These projects were designed to encourage the growth of open systems. Through the use of various components, alternatives were presented to parents, teachers, and community leaders; dialogue was encouraged; and decisions were made. A discussion of those six components selected for the 1968-69 intervention follows:

Parental involvement in decision making,

In-service training,

Observation and feedback,

Diagnostic and follow-up work,

Development of new research tools.

Although these components are presented separately, they are closely interrelated; they should be viewed as overlapping parts of a single thrust with the common purpose of promoting openness.

Parental Involvement in Decision Making

Involving parents in the decision making process of the Head Start program was BUER's most important but, perhaps, most difficult task. BUER's efforts met with limited success. The importance of parental participation in the formulation of an educational program for lower income children cannot be underestimated. Those who generally make decisions about the education of children in lower income communities--legislators,

administrators, and professionals--are often unacquainted with many realities of community life. They do not realize all that goes into slum living, shopping in its stores, and sending children to its schools. Parents, on the other hand, are on intimate terms with these subjects. They add a perspective which inevitably must call for reassessment of immediate needs and longterm educational goals. Collaboration between parents and professionals, then, can lead to an educational program better geared to children's needs, particularly if the parents have or obtain necessary knowledge and skills.

Due to the unique concerns and experiences of lower income communities, extraordinary tactics must be used to initiate and sustain parental involvement in formal educational process. What is a stimulating program for middle class parents who have an economic and political voice in the education of their children, may be useless to individuals who do not have viable educational, economic, political and social alternatives. Discussions about carefully balanced diets may seem useless to people who cannot afford to buy the foods being discussed. Learning how to eliminate rats seems more critical to some lower income parents than does studying language development of preschool children. Lower income parents are as interested (and as apathetic) about their children's education as middle income parents. However, due to the effects and concomitants of poverty, they rarely are as involved in the planning of that education.

Parent involvement in educational programs reflects the values and attitudes of parents, teachers and administrators. Involvement exists

to a greater or lesser extent not because of specific components or programs but rather without regard to them. Parent involvement may or may not reflect the joint values of parents and school officials. If, however, the values of parents differ greatly from those of school officials, frustration, agitation, alienation and sometimes rebellion result.

At the present time some parents feel relatively disenfranchised and want a more effective voice in educational planning, implemention and evaluation. Exactly how large this group is is not clear. However, BUER and a group of involved parents resolved to discover how many other parents believed their involvement was necessary and how many were willing to expend time and effort in becoming a more integral part of the program.

Clearly, many parents were quite happy to have Head Start staff plan and run an educational program for their children. They may have had complaints about food, bussing, time schedules and rules for eligibility, but they did not show any desire to become intimately involved in policy making and implementation. Whether these parents would have liked to take a more active part in planning the educational program, and the reasons for their inaction are unclear. But, the fact was that most parents were largely uninvolved and passively accepted programs and staff.

Only when a severe crisis over the continuation of the program or a controversial teacher or issue arose, was parent involvement affective and widespread. As soon as the crisis was resolved, parents became detached; they made no provisions for continuing involvement. One can ar-

gue that Head Start parents have other concerns that are more pressing than the education of their children. Perhaps these concerns--health, housing, clothing, jobs--require most of their time and energy. Perhaps mere survival is the main concern for many; involvement in an educational program is a luxury they cannot afford. Many families may expend all their efforts on survival but certainly not all. At any income level, some parents will be more disposed than others to become active in the education of their children. The others will spend their time, money and efforts on other concerns. If this is a just assessment of the concerns of South End parents, then from the parents of one-hundred fifty South End children, there should be a number who have high enough priority to the education of their children to warrant active involvement in an educational program, if such involvement is encouraged.

Because BUER and Head Start staff were operating under the assumption that parent involvement is essential to openness, BUER devoted much time to planning projects to draw parents into various phases of the program. Most of these efforts met with outright failure or very limited success.

BUER experimented with a variety of approaches to initiate parental involvement in the Head Start program and in BUER's intervention. BUER organized the Parents Research Advisory Committee to act as consultant to BUER and as a liaison between BUER and the community. At first parents were enthusiastic about communicating their concerns and complaints to BUER, but they continually decried the lack of communication between various agencies and the community. Moreover, they deplored

what they saw to be the apathy of other parents as indicated by low attendance at parents meetings. They found that they could only generate parental involvement over particularly controversial issues. As soon as these issues were resolved, indifference would return. At one point, the Parents Committee organized a parents march on a city agency to present some demands, including the demand that they be allowed to discuss various issues with officials. The parents were told that they could attend the next agency meeting, but they were never notified as to when the meeting was scheduled nor that their demands were on the agenda.

As time went on, the Parents Committee expanded its activities to include the exploration of special educational areas such as resources available for children unable to attend public school, and possibilities of early entrance into public school. Moreover, the Parents Committee aided BUER in planning workshops for parents as well as a parent resource room. The workshops were a limited success due to bad weather, timing and location. On the average, eight parents attended each session.

The parent resource room was conceived as a center in the South End where parents would find information concerning educational alternatives for preschoolers, school-age children, and adolescents. This center was to be a place where parents could discover educational alternatives for all their children, including those with physical, mental, emotional and sensory disabilities. The Parents Committee and BUER made plans for the resource room, discussed it, hired personnel for it, and even went to New York to study somewhat similar endeavors. However, the

idea never became a reality--the center was never established for many reasons, the most prominant one having been the failure of BUER staff to realize the extent of differences in values between parents and themselves, and, as a result, BUER's inability to enter into a meaningful dialogue with examples that would help parents in the reexamination of positions and a consequent exchange of responsibilities.

The Parents Research Advisory Committee was a small group of very active parents. The great bulk of the parents, on the other hand, were not intimately involved in policy making and implementation. The exact reasons for their passivity are not clear. Any number of approaches were used to stimulate their involvement. These approaches will be touched on in the discussions of other components of the intervention.

In-Service Training

A second component contributing to opening the system was in-service training which provided a link between professional staff and the community. Moreover, it engendered a dialogue among teachers, trainees, and other professionals. It encouraged flexibility of the various roles within the system and eventually led, in some cases, to vocational mobility without the system.

The composition of the Head Start staff provided a link between the community and professionals. The 1968-69 Head Start staff was made up of eleven teachers and sixteen trainees: three teachers and twelve trainees were community members who had varied backgrounds; some were high-risk employees, others were Neighborhood Youth Corps graduates,

and several had one to three years college credit. The youngest was eighteen, the oldest fifty-one. Their experience at working both in the community and with young children was considerable. The variety of backgrounds among the staff provided insurance that community values and needs would be incorporated into program planning.

In-service training was particularly suited to stimulating discussion and evaluation of teaching techniques. At first, training of aides was left mainly to teachers. Eventually a program was instituted in which trainees met in small groups to discuss, among themselves, various aspects of the educational process. The more experienced trainees elected to study effective styles for handling 'teaching problems'. They selected children from their own classes and set up, directed, and observed demonstrations. A second group discussed children in their own classrooms, and, as a result, became more articulate in discussing child development. A third group discussed methods of teaching concepts through use of classroom materials. When evaluating this program of group study, the trainees expressed discontent with the limited resources within the small group and a need to meet in larger groups and with teachers and other professionals. Alternative plans emerged to replace the group study program.

Interest-centered meetings were then organized to explore, with consultants, concerns peculiar to day care programs. At these meetings, trainees, teachers, observers, and neighborhood workers exchanged views on programs for children and parents. Trainees observed diagnostic sessions and discussed with teachers and consultants ways of dealing with children.

Trainees, teachers and parents also attended a Boston University School of Education faculty meeting about university involvement in lower income communities. Community representatives reacted strongly not only to what was said, but also to the lack of black faculty members and the whole experience of being on campus. In discussing these reactions, university faculty and Head Start staff came upon the idea of an off-campus course in early childhood education given for college credit. Five trainees and one teacher enrolled. The off-campus course provided still another means of stimulating dialogue among trainees, teachers, and consultants.

The increased dialogue exposed teachers, trainees, and consultants to one another's discipline and contributed to an increased flexibility of roles. Roles were not strictly delineated. Trainees who originally were delegated the responsibilities of merely cleaning up became co-teachers; parents took on greater decision-making responsibilities; teachers became supervisors; and supervisors became administrators. In-service training made educational facilities more available which led to career advancement. At the end of the off-campus course in early childhood education, four of the six participants were accepted into various training programs, including a program designed for community people interested in careers in education.

Observation and Feedback

Observation of classrooms and feedback to teachers and parents were important steps in creating a substantive dialogue among parents, teachers and observers. Usually parents have little or no idea of what goes on in

classrooms beyond what they get from informal generalized reports from teachers. In general, teachers seriously discuss only children who cause unusual disturbance. Similarly, teachers get little feedback from supervisors who must cover so many classes that they can give only limited attention to any one class. The function of the observer was to concentrate on this type of communication.

In order to facilitate communication between teachers and parents, observers were selected to include both skilled professionals and community residents. Because the target community was predominately black, most observers were black, though other groups were also represented. Individuals who had lived in the community for a considerable time and were in circumstances similar to the population of parents, made up most of the observational team. Very few observers had had extensive training or experience in preschool education, and as a result, they were sometimes unable to understand the implications of what was happening in classrooms. Although much happened in the observer-teacher and observer-parent interchanges, due to lack of training, the full potential of the observation and feedback component was not realized.

Professionals from Head Start and University staff met regularly with observers for training sessions. The disciplines of education, social work, psychiatry and psychology were all represented at these meetings. Graduate students worked along with community residents in learning professional skills and their application. The implications of the various tasks were discussed in seminars. The training of observers led to a closer relationship between BUER and the community.

Moreover, it encouraged some observers to matriculate in formal degree programs.

Depending on training and aptitude, observers were assigned a variety of tasks. Some used both cognitive and social-emotional tasks to test children individually. Some observed whole classes using standardized procedures. Others observed diagnostic sessions. Some observers interviewed parents. Others joined in planning and interpretation of these studies as research assistants. All observers were dedicated to discussing their observations with teachers, parents, and university staff; and all attended staff meetings of BUER and Head Start to participate in decision making.

Observers had varied reactions about the importance of their role as a vehicle to bringing parents and teachers together. Some observers had difficulty establishing good rapport with teachers. Some teachers were eager for feedback and were able to use the information to their advantage. In other cases, little interchange took place.

In addition to discussing their observations with teachers, obserbers also informed parents about times when they could watch their children being tested and the results of those tests. Moreover, observers tried to make themselves available so that parents could discuss their children's problems. Some observers were more able to stimulate parent involvement than others. One observer sent letters to parents of all children she had observed. She included her phone number so that she would be readily accessible, but she received only one response. In all, approximately half of the parents made use of observer's availability.

Half of the observers at the end of the study had reservations about the usefulness of their role. They felt that the teacher could have effected parent contact without them whenever the parent was interested in feedback. Moreover, they thought that the observer is often more of a hindrance to the teacher than a help. The other group of observers were somewhat more enthusiastic about their role. They had had many more successful feedback experiences and had encountered parents who were anxious to engage in a substantive dialogue about their children.

Diagnostics and Follow-up with Disturbed Children and their Families

The diagnostic and follow-up component was originally designed to show parents whose children have special emotional or educational problems the various alternatives open to them and the facilities available for treatment of these problems. The diagnostic component was loosely organized and allowed parents to seek advice either on an informal or formal basis. Occasionally a parent requested that a child undergo diagnostic procedures, but more often than not, children were referred by teachers, observers, neighborhood workers, public schools, social workers, and family service personnel. If the child's problems was to be considered on an informal basis, teachers and neighborhood workers met with diagnostic staff consisting of psychiatrists, psychologists, educational supervisors, social workers, speech and hearing specialists, community therapists, and classroom observers. Then individuals from the diagnostic staff would make one or more visits to the classroom to observe the child's ongoing activities.

The accessibility of the diagnostic unit allowed teachers to utilize the diagnostic services whenever they had questions regarding a child's behavior. Such questions arose spontaneously in staff meetings and conferences between teachers, trainees, neighborhood workers, and classroom observers. Using the specialized knowledge of each of the members of the diagnostic team, the teacher could obtain information about the child and his family. Moreover, the style and special abilities of the teacher were considered. The child's problem was then interpreted in the context of the home and the classroom situation. The diagnostic team made recommendations to the teacher and the parents about new techniques of dealing with the child. Sometimes the recommendations took the form of a demonstration with a child or a group of children. The main advantage of the informality of the diagnostic component was that it encouraged parents and teachers to seek advice about problems which might otherwise have been ignored. Moreover, it reduced resistance to the program by allowing staff to ask questions without formally committing themselves to a definitive study. The informal approach served as an effective training adjunct. And finally, it involved children in an on-going program of assessment and feedback to parents.

When a child's problem warranted deeper study, a formal diagnostic program was undertaken in collaboration with the child's family. Many parents were instinctively reluctant to have their child undergo diagnostic procedures due to their misunderstanding of emotional problems in growth and development and their stereotypes of psychiatry and its association to state hospitals, shock therapy, restraint, and confinement.

This stereotyped expectation was responsible for preventing several children from obtaining needed services. BUER discovered that the modification of this attitude was vital to the successful operation of the diagnostic unit.

If the family was willing to cooperate, formal diagnostic procedures were begun. A diagnostic workshop was initiated in which the parent participated directly. The formal study included a detailed inquiry into the family situation and the history of the child. Past medical and social records were obtained, and psychological evaluative techniques were used. Medical, neurological, and psychiatric specialists were consulted when necessary. Diagnostic data was interpreted to parents and teachers in terms of a child's behavior at home and in school. Alternatives were then discussed and recommendations for follow-up were made.

One of five alternative courses was generally recommended. Often the diagnostic team recommended that a child remain in his regular Head Start class, but that he be given special attention by the teacher under clinic guidance. Sometimes children were placed in the Head Start special class. The special class was organized to service children with profound developmental disturbances who derive minimal benefit or are actually harmed by being included in regular classes. These children--the severely retarded, the psychotically withdrawn, the disorganized--are unable to take advantage of regular educational facilities, and yet have few special facilities available to them. For older children who are excluded from the public schools for behavioral or learning difficulties, the ungraded transitional class was instituted. In this class, a child's needs were directly serviced.

These classes were not appropriate to the needs of some of the children undergoing diagnostics. These children were referred to other schools or clinics for direct service. Still other children were given direct treatment by the diagnostic staff in conjunction with the South End Family Service Clinic. At least half the children who underwent diagnostic treatment were followed up with a recommended service or referral.

Instrument Development: A tool for feedback

BUER needed some means of gauging the effects of the intervention on the behavior of Head Start children. To fill this need, a new research tool, the Classroom Behavior Form (CRB) was developed. The CRB was designed to measure a child's productivity in relation to various teacher styles and curricula. It provided teachers, observers, and BUER staff with a means of evaluating the effectiveness of feedback to teachers, and it provided concrete evidence to support other observations.

The CRB focused on classroom (or playground, or field trip) behavior of a single child over a ten minute period which was divided into thirty second segments. Behavior was sampled at various times during the day, the week, and the year. The data was then summarized bringing out central tendencies (means) and variabilities (ranges) of behavior in ten minute periods during a single day, and in periods spanning several days. Observer variability was controlled for by systematic rotation of observers and by extracting observer variance.

The fourteen scales of the CRB fall into three general groups. The first scale describes the extent of the child's productivity. The second

group of scales describes the type of productivity in which the child is engaged. And the third group records the conditions under which he is behaving. The scales are broken down as follows:

Extent of productivity

Participation--rejection to intense involvement

Type of productivity

Process focus, form--authoritarian to demonstration to experimental
Process focus, content--mechanical to skills to percepts to concepts to transformations
Use of materials--irrelevant to creative
Curriculum--activity to substantive to routine

Conditions surrounding productivity

Control, overt and covert--external to internal
Behavior--withdrawn to hyperactive
Social interaction--agents, type and mode
Role of child--spectator to participant
Group size--number of individuals involved in activity

Correlations between matched observations--two observers watching the same child at the same time--range between .30 and .94 with a median of .70. The scales have been modified and training procedures have been revised on the basis of the observer agreement study.

Observer training involved the following activities:

Group observation and discussion of classroom behaviors
Use of total class and single child films and video-tapes
Readings and discussion of child development including such models as those of Guilford, Piaget, Erickson
Comparisons of two observers recording a child simultaneously
Observation of children with intellectual and emotional disabilities
Seminars with teachers and parents
Observation of children of different ages
Use of other, simpler scales
Discussions of the relation of classroom behavior to behavior in other situations, including home, playground and test
Concurrent recording and video-taping

Observers, then, were trained extensively so they could both record behavior

and discuss their observations with teachers and parents. They gained both knowledge of procedures and also understanding of the rationale behind the use and development of procedures. Moreover, they were able to use this knowledge in generating dialogue with parents, teachers, and other professionals.

Evaluation

Given a whole series of assumptions, beliefs, values and presumptions, we end up (or begin) with a model for intervention which has these characteristics:

1. Emerging design
2. Use of feedback in promoting change
3. Decisions resting on community consent
4. Unifying principle of openness

But if "model" implies preconceived structures that hold constant over a finite period of time and to which can be attributed certain consistent properties, then what we have is a non-model, one that does not lend itself to specific comparisons with more discrete models because its shape and size are constantly changing. This produces a dilemma over both intermodel as well as intramodel comparisons. Without such a constant, sustained structure that can be depended upon over time, questions about whether children, teachers or parents have changed are, necessarily, beyond the scope of this study and its underpinnings.

One thing that interventions can do is to superficially affect behaviors during the course of these interventions. We cannot observe thought or feeling processes, but we can observe and measure the quality and quantity of verbal and social interaction, the physical presence of people in settings and mechanical aspects of application. Let us call these factors "traffic patterns." "Traffic pattern" interventions include most of what comes under the heading of educational research on teaching, including studies of team teaching, ungraded schools, homogeneous groups and tracking. Such interventions affect where individuals are over spe-

cified periods of time and, consequently with whom they are most likely to come in contact. "Traffic pattern" aspects of interventions are directly subject to manipulation and contingent measurement. Presumptions are often made about relationships between changing patterns of interaction and changing ways that children (or adults) think and feel. Usually it is never established that the proposed changes in patterns occurred, only that they were intended. Then, explicit criteria are used to ascertain whether the intervention was successful, even though it is not established that the intervention took place. But to do this, it is necessary to show the existence of explicit and desired patterns. The question of whether these patterns, once established, will contribute to, cause or determine other changes in groups or individuals remains to be seen.

Connections between interventions and criteria are critical. Either can be highly specific or very general. Specific criteria are appropriate for general interventions. Mismatches (general to specific, specific to general) are inappropriate until matched connections can be demonstrated. Given the highly probable existence of matched connections, it is then appropriate to explore the possibility of their being demonstrable relationships between mismatches--for example the possibility that a highly specific interventional program will produce generalized results which can be inferred from generalized criteria.

Greater specificity will enhance reliability but limit generalized ability. There is always the risk that efforts in the direction of precision will lead to highly accurate nonsense. On the other hand, exces-

sively global strategies can result in data that are hopelessly confounded. There is serious question about whether the choice of interventional strategies and of criteria are the result of the specific theoretical goals and other scientific considerations, or whether they are a result of what kind of training a person happens to have and what kind of materials and instruments are available. Availability probably does more to determine what goes into most studies than any scientific, educational or theoretical consideration.

In either case, because educational interventions are necessarily of this "traffic pattern" variety (as opposed to drug studies,) the first step of any evaluation program is to establish the existence of patterns. The BUER intervention directed its attention to program-community-university dialogue which would open up the program, involve the community and take advantage of university facilities and personnel. It was a global intervention both in its goal of dialogue as well as in its strategies--which were to result in and from dialogue. Strategies become criteria, as well as input, for future change. The intervention must be evaluated in terms of its fecundity for generating these strategies and incorporating them and new ideas into the developing system, rather than by changes in individuals. Whether interventions and criteria are systemic or individual depends on how change processes are conceptualized. Programs that focus on individuals and either ignore the system or consider it distinctly of secondary significance, are as justified as systemic programs--but both require intervention-criteria compatibility if results are to make any sense. A choice of either presumes that change

will come about most efficiently if a given hierarchal order is followed. This leaves us with the question, do changes in individuals follow or lead changes in systems?

The design of most interventional programs (including Head Start, compensatory education, therapeutic tutoring) do not make these distinctions. For the most part they are rather weighty collections of mismatches. The number of ways that I.Q. is used as criteria for every possible type of intervention--whether it be global or specific, systemic or individual--suggests that it really does not make any difference what is happening to children just so long as their I.Q.'s are changing, presumably upward. The general rule seems to be, figure out what you would like to do with children--if it raises their I.Q. (or some other test score) then it is successful; if not it is exploratory--no matter what the connection is.

Every year Head Start Evaluation has featured pre and post I.Q. testing along with other tests which have varied from year to year. Evaluations of other interventional programs have used many other tests, but always an I.Q. test, usually the Stanford-Binet. Why? Because it is the best predictor of school success? So the argument goes, if B is correlated with (predicts) C, then improvement in B will lead to improvement in C. And no improvement in B will indicate no improvement in C? Or perhaps it is not B, but something that leads to B that is associated with C, in which case altering B will leave C unaffected. To compound the problem, with regards to Head Start, there are clearly many different kinds of programs--different priorities, values, staff, politics, racial

atmosphere and facilities. For many programs, education of young children is a side issue. If education is the highest priority it can be doing many different things--socialization, memorization, motivation, problem solving, empathy. It might be of a form and content which makes a Stanford-Binet I.Q. test the most appropriate instrument to be used as a criterion for program success.

Other programs legitimately consider political, social and economic goals as being more appropriate.

> We walked into a run-down boarded up building with forty-five children jammed into a room with one teacher. It was well over 100° inside. We could not understand why there were no other adults or room, or why some or all of the children were not outside, or why there were so few materials around.... But there were disturbing answers to our questions. The other "teachers" were organizing plantation workers. The Head Start program was a front for the community to get minimal job security for the fathers of starving children. So it occurred to us as we set up our Binet kits, maybe we ought to be trying to evaluate the organizing of workers rather than wasting time with I.Q. tests?
>
> Episode
>
> The meeting of all parents who had children in Head Start in that county was held in an old wooden church. Every inch of the church, including the windows, inside and out, was jammed with people. SNCC and CORE workers were passing out literature. A movie camera and klieg lights were set up and a tape recorder was ready to do.... The meeting began with a hymn and a prayer. The leader was as powerful as he was charismatic--the audience continually responding to what he said with yes's and noes. Religion and politics surged together in what was said and how it was said.... But it was a Head Start meeting of parents, staff and the local board. They controlled money, an educational program, jobs, purchasing--they being blacks who had never controlled very much of anything before. And

so we were going to contribute to a national evaluation by testing kids, observing classrooms, taking inventories of facilities and interviewing parents about how they felt about Head Start?

We met with a group of parents who wanted to know, why we were going to test their children? What kinds of test we were going to use? Who was going to do the testing? What were the results to be used for? And there were a lot of accusations and threats. They were in it to run the show. They wanted black teachers, black administrators, black testers. So we said, "If you feel that way, forget it." And they said, "What do you mean forget it?"

For three years observers had been visiting this center, located in an old school house in a residential section of a New England mill town. Big, airy rooms and lots of supplies, blocks, bicycles and swings. Seven classrooms, all in a nice homey situation, with two, three and sometimes four adults in each room, each with twenty children. The observers were always trying to figure out what those seven classes had in common--what made them into Head Start classes as opposed to any other kind of preschool classes. On what basis could they be compared? Given the differences in activities, rules, materials, demands, social interactions, authorities, could any one criteria be used to compare these classes? They just did not have the same goals. Kids had different opportunities in each class.

Head Start was and is clearly a world of diversity with every kind of excellence and mediocrity, dedication and deceit, suffering and strangulation. It is just this variability of function that is noticibly ignored in evaluations but which is so crucial to understanding Head Start as a social movement.

Implications for Intervention and the Community

There were severe contradictions in the administrative and supervisory structure of South End Head Start, contradictions that we saw repeatedly

in programs throughout the country, but more deeply in the South End because we were around longer. As has been recounted above, there were many problems in opening up the educational system that was South End Head Start. How to get and keep parents involved? How to stimulate varied and thoughtful learning experiences for children? How to service children with emotional and learning problems? How to provide teachers with feedback so that they could better service children? How to relax traditional professional and administrative barriers? During the intervention we struggled with these problems among ourselves (BUER), with parents, teachers, administrators, and the community at large. Parents were hired as consultants to assist our deliberations. Community leaders were brought in to observe and participate in these deliberations--it was certainly necessary that BUER be as open as we would have liked Head Start to be. By the time the intervention began, BUER staff consisted of mostly community people who were specially trained--the distance between university and community was being systematically diminished, or at least we thought it was. BUER input into the community was clearly satisfying a service commitment to children and families and was building a foundation for continuity.

But the system did not open up in any significant way. There were certainly some changes in training; disturbed children were serviced; teachers were getting more immediate and relevant supervision, and observers were constantly in classrooms, talking to teachers and parents and informally monitoring the system--the ingredients for openness were present, but they did not go very far as each one stopped where it was left and

Head Start staff very rarely picked it up. We got the local delegate agency to construct one way observational glass so that two other classrooms had excellent visual and auditory facilities for observing children in classrooms. This made it possible for groups of teachers, parents or individuals from the community to observe children being taught, playing or being tested. They could then sit around and in seminar sessions discuss what was being done, why it was being done and how it fitted in with the understanding and values of parents. These observation rooms were actively used throughout the years that BUER was involved in the South End, most intensively during the intervention year. They were used no more than six times during the year following the intervention.

Components developed separately but never coalesced. The role of observer was a constant dilemma for observers and teachers in the community. The argument and the practice of open classrooms was never really understood by parents or the community. Diagnostic clinic remains separate from other interventional components and, after the termination of the interventional program, was continued as an isolated program by another clinic. Teachers became reluctant participants of the feedback game, but were never involved, passionate partners. Many parents backed our activity and looked to us for support in their struggle with Head Start teachers, administrators and rules. But, again, it was not a part of the whole thrust.

In simple terms, Head Start was, and is, publicly supported education (federal) mostly (90%) for children from lowest income families, generally without formal ties to public schools, for preschool children who have

a relatively high probability of failing or dropping out of school before high school graduation and of being chronically disabled academically. In the South End, problems being dealt with by Head Start seemed to be the script for how they were to be handled. This is not an evaluation or condemnation of South End Head Start--rather it is a statement about the institution of Head Start which is made after careful observation and involvement over an extended period of time. Our observations of other programs in New England, Mississippi, New York, California and Hawaii have served to bring macro-systemic issues and practices into relief.

Although the relation between poverty and education is clouded by the perennial nature-nurture conundrum, there is little question that they affect each other in important and enduring ways. No matter how the problem is viewed, it is quite clear that children and adolescents of lower income families

spend less time in school
are behind in academic skills and knowledge
are less inclined or motivated for education
are more alienated from the school
have less use for schools

than their middle income peers. An important consideration is the inevitable distance between poor people and the schools that are supposed to service their children. Our society has changed dramatically--urban concentrations, racial awakening, technological change--but there is real question about whether schools have changed at all, much less kept pace with social, political and cultural change.

Head Start was a move in this direction--a different population of children, federal funding through local agencies, maximum participation

of the poor, target community residents as trainees for vocational ungrading. Education was to change, at least at the preschool level to keep up with the times. The specific physical, mental, emotional and social needs of preschoolers from poor families was to be attended to. It was to be unencumbered by traditional educational restraints--community involvement on boards and in classrooms meant that constituencies of boards would be economically, socially, and ethnic-racially homogeneous. In other words, that black parents living in black inner-city areas, would control policy regarding the preschool education of their own children, including control of budgeting, staffing, programming and evaluation.

Head Start was conceived not only as an educational program, but as a total effort focusing initially on preschool children to upgrade educational opportunities for poor children. The poverty program produced an initial wave of idealism and excitement because of its goals and its highly imaginative programs. Unfortunately, or perhaps inevitably, the implementation of these programs was (and is) erratic and often very misleading.

From the outset, funding of programs has been a succession of nightmares--programs that operated for months without funding or with delayed funding, last minute budget negotiations, parades of rules and regulations about how much money people could be paid, budgetary squeezes between hot lunch programs, neighborhood workers and teachers' salaries or anything else that happen to be on the budget. Ad hoc staffing policies quickly became rigid rules that were developed to meet sometimes real and sometimes imaginary problems. Trainees have been hired, but never trained--

and if they were, they did not obtain a credential that was transferable. Facilities included every kind of disaster imaginable, as well as some that were luxurious. The rule was diversity--double, triple and quadruple standards that made anything and everything possible, but also made it possible to arbitrarily close centers' entire programs and to punish those who were too successful in teaching the poor how little they really had but how important they were.

In the South End, facilities included church basements, community centers, large rooms without partitions, buildings with huge flooding and heating problems--an educational operation that was encumbered by all of the housing, heating, flooding and toileting problems of the community. Although obviously in the South End, or elsewhere, everything was not wrong with every building, there were standards of noise, crowding, dirt and physical discomfort which hardly made school a place to overcome alienation.

Procedures with regards to hiring staff, setting wages, vacations, fringe benefits, working hours and supervision were in constant revision and confusion. The professional-community battle was being fought on every front. Teachers were driven out or ran away--turnover was relatively rapid--75-90% every twelve months. When teachers tried to set up a contract with the agency they were rebuked and several were punished.

The Parents' Advisory Council met very sporadically--during the first six months of the intervention it met only once--attendance was miniscule and discussions rarely got into preschool education.

With few exceptions the South End did not have supervisors qualified by training, teaching and supervisory experience. Most of the teachers were not explicitly trained to work with preschool children.

With regard to teachers, trainees, and other Head Start staff parents and the community, it was never apparent that there was a strong belief that preschool children could be educated. Head Start was a place for children to spend time during the day--to play with other children, to get a good lunch, to go on trips, to get medical and dental checkups --but it was literally pre school. Many parents were beginning to think about education in less formal ways--as not being confined to school or to schoolage--but the commitment to Head Start was always confused and, therefore, diffuse. Criteria for establishing policy were, consequently, amorphous. Some parents were attracted to reading and writing as critical to the development of any criteria--these were relatively tangible. But even then arguments and actions were not convincing because many of the parents realized that it was not only that reading and writing was what they had had in school but that it was all they had had.

The problems of administering Head Start programs, and South End Head Start in particular, were formidable. To evaluate Head Start they have to be understood--both why they existed and the effects they had. Implicit in national evaluations of Head Start and in the interventional studies of Head Start Evaluation and Research Centers is that administrative factors are irrelevant and we can afford to ignore them--that Head Start is essentially an educational program that can be evaluated and best described in educational terms. This necessarily assumes that

there is sufficient child, staff, facilities, methodology and community homogeniety, along with administrative regularity, to warrant asking the question and seeking answers before the existence of homogeneity and regularity are verified.

Our observations in the South End (and in Head Start programs in different parts of the country) strongly suggest that administrative diversity is, at the same time, the indirect result of poverty, and the immediate antecedent for necessary educational and social reforms. The whole timing and format of the poverty program is not an accident. The existence of the poverty program in the executive Office of the President has a rather temporary organization without a committed budget and is closely connected with how our society views poverty and how deeply in the sand it holds its head. While the precariousness of the poverty program has served to facilitate the development of imaginative programs with unprecedented structures and practices, it has also lead to an administrative never never land. Without going into the reasons for poverty legislation, they are clearly equivocal. There is no long term legislative commitment to poverty programs--perhaps Head Start has a greater commitment than others. Communities have coped with the vagaries of Head Start funding, regulations for child eligibility, staffing and facilities, in diverse ways depending on what the stakes were. But it has rarely been our experience to find a center, or even a class, that has coped to the extent that programs, staff and facilities were actively pursuing predominantly educational goals over an extended period of time. Now it is possible that this represents either sampling bias--we just

did not see the right programs--or observational distortion--we saw the right ones but our data are suspect.

But the overall structure of Head Start practices and legislative realities, including funding, size of Washington and regional staffs, use of local administrative units with little or no experience in large scale operations and locations of programs in poorly serviced, run down slum areas, are enough to guarantee that the South End, with or without university intervention, would be more or less like other programs. Putting this in another way, purely or predominantly educational goals are luxuries that poverty programs cannot afford, particularly if they are really dealing with poverty and following the letter and spirit of maximum feasible participation of the poor. Disenfranchisement is related to poverty as both cause and effect. The poverty cycle cannot be broken by more effective teaching methods. This is not a question of which communities are sampled, or what kinds of data are obtained. Nor is it a question of values--which would be better, to spend money on education, community action or hospitals?, that is, if community involvement is a serious issue.

The evaluation dilemma is, who and what determine goals, and therefore evaluation criteria? Because congress passes legislation establishing an Office of Economic Opportunity, does it necessarily follow that the goals of all programs are to be determined by that congress, that in many important ways does not represent the poor? There would appear to be some serious contradiction between the principle of the poor (or blacks, Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans) participating in programs and the out-

side imposition of goals. Poverty legislation describes goals of Head Start in terms of the physical, social and intellectual development of preschool children whose <u>families</u> are officially poor. No parents would deny the validity of these goals, but many would question selection procedures and priorities. It is probably true that the existence of Head Start has always depended upon those same inane but universally accepted legislated goals which made it acceptable to people of diverse persuasions and colors. It is not threatening to provide funds for preschool children --what else could the money be reasonably used for? Even if poor people were to control purse strings it seemed quite clear that Head Start did not offer sufficient opportunity for them to gain political benefits. At any rate, it is quite clear that Head Start has always been immensely popular throughout the country. Even with extremely difficult working conditions, substandard wages and equivocal support for the educational program from the community and the local agency, there has always been an abundance of volunteers, waiting lists for teachers and ready access to many community resources.

This popularity was encumbered by popular (and political) presumption about the purposes, values and possibilities of Head Start which led legistators, professional and administrative Head Start staff and the public to ask whether these goals were being achieved--questions which eventually got reduced to I.Q. points. This is not the place to explain why a time honored instrument of proven reliability and variability can take over much as detail or the proverbial cart. If Head Start made children's I.Q.'s go up, it would be a success; if not, it

would be a failure. The I.Q. becomes the goal, purpose, aim and end all. It was not that professionals did not seek other instruments--they did and invented measures of motivation, socialization, achievement, dependency, language and productivity--without realizing that <u>when they ran out of Binet, they ran out of tests</u>. Within its variability, the Binet includes that which is decipherable in all of the other tests. Critical to this discussion is using or considering Binet performance--or any individual test performance--as a legitimate goal of Head Start, both in terms of legislative goals as well as those inferred from what is actually taking place in Head Start programs throughout the country.

It is our contention that, because of the reasons discussed above, legislated goals are only peripherally related to Head Start operations. Children do have medical examinations, many have lunches and even hot lunches. The community is involved to a greater or lesser extent. But these goals, which have gotten interpreted by Head Start Evaluation to be psychometric, are not part of any real action. They may mean something to evaluators or developmental psychologists, but they are not constructively related to children in Head Start classes as they live in their communities and in their homes. Teachers do and say many different things in classrooms. Some make very specific demands on children. Others encourage them to choose activities, paces, materials,and interactions. For some, parents are critical to early childhood education, while for others it is not education at all. The imposition of any psychometric criteria on this extreme multi-dimensional variability which is Head Start is, at best, naive.

How then is educational variability to be viewed, described, analyzed, manipulated and evaluated? What is the optimal--parsimonious, relevant, connected, non-redundant--set of variables and methodologies to deal with them, given their number, characteristics, coincidence and dependence? What makes a difference in children's educational lives? Good teaching? Good relationships? Well organized homes? Good taste or good grammar? And how is this to be studied? Are decisions of how and what, questions of opinion, tradition, scientific judgement, experience, logic or luck?

The problem for the researcher is to find the smallest number and least sized behavioral units that can be studied over the largest number of children, teachers and classes. Given any one or more measures, appropriateness (as opposed to using more, other or grosser measures) depends on sensitivity to manipulation of independent variable(s). If certain individuals or groups are manipulated (given a treatment of some type) and there is no demonstrable effect, then either the treatment was not really given, it had no effect, or the measures used were not sensitive to treatment. To infer that the treatment was ineffective must assume that the treatment did, in fact, take place in a uniform manner on comparable samples and that criterion measurements were appropriate for determining treatment effects. Similarly, to infer that measurements are inappropriate assumes that there is reason to believe in the effectiveness of the manipulation, that it did effect behaviors of children, families and communities, but that this effect was not measured (or measurable)--either in the right way, at the best time or in the most appropriate units.

For some manipulations that focus on specific behaviors, criteria are predetermined by the manipulation. But educational research must eventually study transfer and generalization. What can knowledge and skills be used for? The transformation across time, place and material take place? These questions cannot be answered mechanically or directly. There is almost a contradiction between transformation and measurement because if transformation is taught it is no longer transformation. Testing assumes both a yard stick and an object to which it is applied. It is not at all clear that either assumption is satisfied.

As we view five years of Head Start--programs, evaluation and research--we have an uneasy feeling of discontinuity. Operations have gone in many directions with strong regional, community, political and social dimensions. Educational effects were always ambiguous and peripheral, not because of incompetence, but rather because that is not what is was all about, especially in really impoverished communities where positive results would be most likely to show, and where most Head Start money was being spent. Given local conditions of health, housing, transportation, garbage collection and welfare, education has to be secondary, no matter what legislation or guidelines say and no matter what are the intentions of teachers and other staff. To base evaluation and research on the assumption that education is primary is to totally ignore what exists in thousands of poor communities throughout the country. Until the existence, variability and effectiveness of real, existing threats of programs established, playing around with educational input and output data will inevitably be a total waste of time. The deter-

mination of primary categories of program might permit the study of secondary effects, but only after careful pre-selection of programs.

Almost all evaluation and research efforts to date have acted as if education was the uniform primary goal of all Head Start operations, and as if other effects were more or less non-existent. This sets the stage for results that are written into a value laden script--change can hardly be demonstrated when input is studied obliquely if at all and instruments are used which have been designed to study stability rather than change. We have just received a letter from Systems Development Corporation (August 6, 1970) indicating that they have received a contract to study data collected from 1966 to 1969 in order to seek answers to the question, "What kinds of Head Start programs are most effective for what kinds of children?" It is truly incredible that at this late date, after so many data are in, that a major analytical effort could continue to so miss the point of asking the same question that was futilely raised in the analysis of data collected during 1966, the first full year of Head Start. Even if we could distinguish programs and children, which we cannot, this effort would be a waste of time because it completely ignores program realities which clearly do not adapt to "kinds of children."

Educational questions must wait their turn and their time. The important and disturbing questions that can probe into the meaning and implications of Head Start have to do with how programs are run, by whom and for what reasons. Polly Greenberg's "The Devil Has Slippery Shoes" (New York: Macmillan, 1969) is a huge outpouring of data about what one

Head Start program was like. But the uniqueness of the experiences of the Child Development Group of Mississippi, as startling as it is, is not as important to our understanding as the similarities which have to exist. There is no simple or right way to deal with poverty and racism. Delays, lies, recrimination, political intrigue and double dealing, personal infighting and assassination, are part and partial of the participatory democracy which has always been at the verbal foundation of Head Start and other poverty programs. They are not problems to be dealt with--they are the action, directly intertwined with poverty as both cause and effect.

Our South End intervention was a clear cut example of this process. We went in talking abcut open systems, communication, feedback, parent involvement, maximum feasible participation in education and evaluation. We were ready to and did supply the community with a badly needed service--screening, diagnosis and treatment for children with behavioral disorders. We had the backing of the staff, parents, administration and some local political activists. But this was not enough--in fact, nothing could have been enough. We, along with teachers, trainees and supervisors were chewed up. But the program has endured, facilities and procedures have become somewhat stabilized and professionals and community residents without formal training have travelled together through a succession of ambiguous detours. Educational programs have been established where previously there had been none. Although funding policies have changed over the years, there are federal funds supporting local educational programs, with the

possibility of community involvement in policy and operational decisions. The deeper that we got into the South End Head Start, the more blatant were the discrepancies between our national testing program and the importance of this particular poverty program in this community. The problems of running the observations and testing program were much more relevant to the value and implications of Head Start than were any results and analyses.

This is not to make a brief for what Head Start should be like and what its goals should be, but rather what reality is and what it has to be. Polly Greenberg discusses a crucial issue when she talks about her black successor with CDGM: "And she knew some things I would never know ever--and neither would the armies of do-gooders like me descending suddenly on the poor all over the country to emancipate them. She knew the anguishing pain of change." Head Start cannot be evaluated or even remotely understood without coming to grips with that "pain."